Volume XCIII No. 9 November 27, 1970 40 cents

commonweal

ST. CHARLES SEMINARY LIBRARY
NOV 2 REC'D
CARTHAGENA STATION, CELINA, OHIO
A-53326 12-70
ST CHARLES SEMINARY
LIBRARY
CARTHAGENA STATION
CELINA OH 45822

FROM HERE TO

THE YEAR OF THE LOSERS
WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS

THE YEAR OF MR. CHOTINER
MICHAEL NOVAK

THE MARXISM OF GEORGE LUKACS AND MERLEAU-PONTY—AT LAST DAVID GROSS & DICK HOWARD **HELDER CAMARA: FOR WHOM THE NOBEL TOLLS** TOM QUIGLEY **AUDEN'S CHAPBOOK** ANNE FREMANTLE **THE STAGE** GERALD WEALES **SCREEN** COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEWS & VIEWS

The Berrigans' Suit

The suit which has been filed in a Connecticut federal court charging denial of civil rights to Dan and Phil Berrigan—specifically the rights to "speak, write and disseminate ideas" and "to practice their religion in a full and meaningful way"—is an interesting legal maneuver, but, unfortunately, seemingly without much hope.

The suit developed after authorities at Danbury Federal Prison denied permission to the Berrigans "to prepare a sermon for delivery, either in person or by tape recording, in specific houses of worship" for the past Yom Kippur and Feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

Attorneys argue that this is a suspension of "the rights guaranteed to the plaintiffs by the First Amendment during the term of their incarceration, thereby rendering the rights a nullity both at the present and in the future, since the rights protected by the First Amendment by their very nature require constant exercise."

It is, as we've indicated, an intriguing point, but destined, we fear, to be legally futile. For even if upheld on the district level, it is extremely unlikely that the case would survive appeal, to the Supreme Court in particular.

This judgment is based not on the intrinsic merits of the case (which may or may not be valid), nor on the competence of counsel (impressive, to say the least). It is based rather on the composition of the courts and, again, the Supreme Court in particular.

When the Supreme Court deigns not even to hear the challenge of a state (Massachusetts) to the conscription of its citizens to serve in an undeclared war (Vietnam), a challenge mandated by state law, what chance is there of this court hearing, much less ruling, in favor of the petition of two individuals with grievances born of the same or related constitutional question?

That's a negative assessment, admittedly. It's made essentially because ours is a depressing Supreme Court. Imagine only one justice (Douglas) feeling that Massachusetts' case was worthy of hearing! (Stewart and Harlan joined with Douglas in dissenting to the decision not-to-hear, but their dissent was for procedural reasons. Both are conservatives and could have been counted upon to rule against Massachusetts, had the case come to a hearing.)

The point to be noted in all of this is that with Warren, Fortas and Goldberg off the Court, with Burger and Blackmun on, you have a Court firmly in Establishment's pocket. Further, with Richard Nixon repledging himself (Nov. 9, at a Key Biscayne press briefing) to getting a Southern conservative on the Court, it's going to remain there for years to come.

Partly by luck, partly by design, Nixon has established a new ideological coloration at the Supreme Court, and it is going to cost not only individuals like Dan and Phil Berrigan, but a whole range of liberal principles. Mark the prediction.

In other words, we have only begun to realize the folly of sending Goldberg to the UN and of purging Fortas. The two cases may go down in history as classic examples of liberals sacrificing themselves to conservatives.

Lyons' Dropping Stock

Trouble has come in bunches for Father Daniel Lyons, S.J., one-time prophet for right-wing causes.

Lyons, who lost his post as editor-publisher of *Twin Circle* after incurring the disfavor of Patrick J. Frawley, Jr., has found his *Twin Circle*-sponsored TV program suspended and his syndicated radio program placed on a self-sustaining basis.

Lyons' travail began during the summer when he failed to heed Frawley's counsel to cool it on the U.S. Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on the Farm Labor Dispute and present both sides of the issue.

Frawley had been Lyons' angel, but angels, it seems, can have poor tempers.

As chairman of the board of Twin Circle Publishing Co., Frawley effected Lyon's resignation from the top editorial position of the newspaper.

Now, *Homefront*, newsletter of the Institute for American Democracy, reports that after KLRN-TV, Austin, advised *Twin Circle* that it was dropping Lyons' TV show (for not meeting the station's "standards of fairness"), *Twin Circle* advised Lyons that it too was suspending the program.

Presumably that still left Lyons with his syndicated radio program. But soon Lyons informed readers of his newspaper column that financial support for the radio program had been withdrawn by *Twin Circle*. Lyons then appealed for contributions which would make the program financially self-sustaining.

Evidently the response has been limited. *Homefront* notes that some stations are continuing to carry the program on public-service time, but that many others, including WAVA in Washington, D.C., have bumped it from the air.

Peterson, *Vancouver Sun*, Canada

Spironoia

Odds and Ends

It wasn't a week for ecumenical niceties. In Glasgow, the *Scottish Catholic Observer* labeled one of the country's most respected Presbyterian leaders "the Enoch Powell of the Church of Scotland." In Boston, Lord Fisher of Lambeth, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1945-61, described Pope Paul as "a glorious, splendid man . . . who always says the wrong thing." Christians, it seems, are getting back into the old swing of things. JOHN DEEDY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Revising the Revisionists

Villanova, Pa.

To the Editors: It is time to revise the revisionists, and Professor Ramsdell Gurney's article on the new-left thesis of cold war origins [Oct. 16] calls for some careful rebuttal. In a brief letter I can only touch some salient points.

More than once the author refers to the "solid documentation" and "substantial evidence" of Alperovitz, Williams, *et al.* Obviously a *Commonweal* article is no place for footnotes, but I do wish he had been a little less assertive about the quality of this "evidence" since his colleagues have a less than sufficient opportunity to challenge it from what is presented in the article. The chief practical application which Prof. Gurney makes of the new-left hypothesis is his opposition to deployment of the ABM. One need not favor this deployment to disagree with the historical hypothesis presented.

One key point, which the author fails to credit sufficiently, is the aim of Western policy in eastern Europe in 1945, viz., popular sovereignty, governments of, for, and by the peoples of Poland, Hungary, and so on. It was not merely a matter of Soviet vs. Western orientation, and it is therefore not complete to say that "Truman demanded the Soviets sanction a reconstituted Polish government along Western lines." It is likewise incomplete and perhaps merely assertive to state that Truman's desire for democracy and free elections was held "to ensure the creation of Western-oriented regimes which would 'contain' the USSR and open new markets for American capital." And what, pray, is "legitimately" different about the Soviet conception of political democracy? We know that conception and the grinding tyranny it implies.

By stating that open elections would mean the dismantling of Soviet-sponsored governments, Prof. Gurney admits that Washington stood with the *people* of Eastern Europe in 1945. To

(*Continued on page 229*)

NEWS & VIEWS: 210 **CORRESPONDENCE: 211**
EDITORIALS: 211
NATIONAL REVIEW'S LITTLE WAR: *Peter Steinfels* **213**
FROM HERE TO '72:
THE YEAR OF THE LOSERS: *Wilson Carey McWilliams, Henry Plotkin and William Stevenson* **214**
THE YEAR OF MURRAY CHOTINER: *Michael Novak* **217**
VERSE: *Edmund Pennant* **221**; *John Kolars* **223**
THE STAGE: *Gerald Weales* **221** **THE SCREEN:** *Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr.* **222**
BOOKS: 224

JAMES O'GARA: *Editor* JOHN DEEDY: *Managing Editor*
PETER STEINFELS: *Associate Editor* ANNE ROBERTSON: *Editorial Assistant*
GERALD WEALES: *Drama* PHILIP T. HARTUNG: *Movies* JOHN FANDEL: *Poetry*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN: *Publisher* JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

COMMONWEAL A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature and the Arts.
Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y.
Printed in the USA and published weekly,
except biweekly Christmas-New Year's and June to mid-September,
by Commonweal Publishing Co., 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016
MUrray Hill 3-2042. *Copyright © 1970 Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.*
US and Canada, $12 a year. Foreign $14. Single copies 40¢

A MOCKERY OF JUSTICE

Last May, in the wake of Cambodia, bullets fired by Ohio National Guardsmen at Kent State University killed four students and wounded nine. Last month a special state grand jury solemnly vindicated those who fired the shots and instead indicted 25 faculty members, former students and students, including the president of the student body, a young man well known for his advocacy of moderation and non-violence. As someone has since commented, the United States would be well advised to turn the My Lai massacre case over to the same grand jury; that way the slain women and children could be indicted and those who did the shooting go scot free.

There is a tradition in these matters that editorial comment should be even-handed, which is taken to mean that a just modicum of blame should be distributed to each side. Within limits we are willing to follow the tradition in this case. The grand jury said that the National Guardsmen were subject to "verbal abuse" that "represented a level of obscenity and vulgarity which we have never before witnessed!" We are willing to grant the point, and no, we do not condone verbal abuse, obscenity, vulgarity or the random rock-throwing that is said to have gone on. But can it reasonably be argued that there is any proportion between such undesirable conduct by some, on the one hand, and the random firing into a mass of young people, on the other? In its inquiry into campus violence the Scranton commission came down hard on the students: "The actions of some students were violent and criminal and those of some others were dangerous, reckless and irresponsible." But the Scranton report went on: "The indiscriminate firing of rifles into a crowd of students and the deaths that followed were unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable." This, we think, is a sane comment on an insane happening.

Were the members of the National Guard in danger from the students? Amazingly little attention has been paid to the findings of the FBI, which used 100 agents in an exhaustive investigation of what happened at Kent and whose findings were subsequently published in the Ohio press. The Guard was not "surrounded" by hostile students, as some have claimed; further, according to Senator Stephen Young of Ohio, all but one of the students killed or wounded were at least 110 feet and in most cases more than 300 feet away from the Guardsmen. A

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quotation from the FBI report gives the flavor and direction of its findings:

"Most of the National Guardsmen who did fire their weapons do not specifically claim that they fired because their lives were in danger. Rather, they generally state in their narrative that they fired after they heard others fire. *We have reason to believe that the claim that their lives were endangered by the students was fabricated subsequent to the event.* [Italics added.] The apparent volunteering by some Guardsmen of the fact that their lives were not in danger gave rise to some suspicions. One Guardsman admitted that his life was not in danger and that he fired indiscriminately into the crowd. He further stated that the Guardsmen had gotten together after the shooting and decided to fabricate the story that they were in danger of serious bodily harm or death from the students. The Guardsmen were not surrounded. Regardless of the location of the students following them, only a very few students were located between the Guard and commons. No Guardsman claims he was hit with rocks immediately prior to the firing."

The grand jury claims that 58 Guardsmen were injured by rocks; the FBI says that only four reported injuries or received treatment. At the time the National Guard said they were responding to sniper fire; the FBI found no evidence whatsoever of any sniper. According to Senator Young, the FBI report held that six Guardsmen could be held criminally responsible for their part in the shootings and supplied their names and serial numbers. For our part, we have no desire to turn these or any Guardsmen into scapegoats; in a tragedy of this dimension, there is no room for vindictiveness. But it is imperative now that a federal rather than a state grand jury explore what happened at Kent and come up with more balanced and responsible findings than those of the local body. As things stand now, the victims stand accused of the crimes of others, and students all over the world lose even more of their confidence in the American system of justice. In the light of the Kent grand jury findings, who can blame them?

A MUDDLED APPROACH

The wonder of the Internal Revenue Service's reconfirmation of the tax-exemption eligibilities of organizations which bring lawsuits in the public interest was much less that the IRS responded to public pressure, from conservationists and environmentalists particularly, but rather that the IRS should ever have attempted to eliminate these exemptions.

The controversy, it will be recalléd, was generated by the Oct. 9 IRS announcement that it was suspending any new grants of tax-exempt status to public-interest law firms and was reviewing the exemptions already held. It was a foolhardy ruling, one that would have vitiated possibilities of getting at polluters and exploiters of natural resources through the courts.

The tax-exemption controversy had its happy ending when the IRS reversed itself Nov. 12, and declared that exemptions were possible after all. But this does not explain how the IRS could have originated its preposterous idea in the first place. Ten months before, in what was billed as his first formal statement of the new decade, President Nixon was exclaiming that "the 1970s absolutely must be the years when America pays its debt to the past" by reclaiming the purity of our environment. "It is literally now or never," said Mr. Nixon. What is obvious is that the urgency of that message failed to convey itself in crucial departments of government, and one reason is because the President has let a lot of the urgency slip himself.

The effects of this attitude go well beyond the IRS. Just a month ago Congressman Henry Reuss was scoring the Federal Water Quality Administration for failing to press the filing of suits against 40 companies identified by the Interior Department as mercury polluters of the nation's waterways. More recently, conservationists exposed Administration policy of withholding environment-impact studies until the decisions they influence have been made and announced, a practice which drastically limits public participation in environmental planning and makes the Administration's rules the only ones.

The new head of the new Environmental Protection Agency, William D. Ruckelshaus, can do much to alter the muddled Administration approach to conservation by some effective coordination of the 6,000 federal employees and 15 agencies concerned with environmental matters. But Ruckelshaus needs more than his own devices to be all an environmental chief should be. He also needs the recommitment of the President in some emphatic fashion which dramatizes unmistakably to the various departments of government that his environmental interests have not cooled, and that he is as firm today as he was yesterday in his determination about the country's paying its debt to the past. In other words, Mr. Nixon has to set the tone, and the tone of late has been something less than one of urgency. This won't get the problems solved.

NEXT WEEK

Commonweal's Christmas book issue will feature an essay on Charles Reich's new book *The Greening of America, How the Youth Revolution Is Trying to Make America Livable.* The magazine's book critics will also list their choices of the season's outstanding titles.

Edward T. Chase will write on the nation's health care system, and there will be reports on black prisoners in South Africa and on the upcoming contract talks in the steel industry.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATIONAL REVIEW'S LITTLE WAR

PETER STEINFELS

NOW THAT it is the only magazine represented in the United States Senate, the *National Review* deserves special attention. The *National Review* is an extension of the persona of William F. Buckley, Jr.: well-financed, well-groomed, nimble in polemic, limited in its range of knowledge to what appears in major newspapers and the books of a handful of authenticated Conservative writers—and witty. The *National Review* can be best appreciated as a joke book. The editors do have certain weaknesses. They are under the impression, for example, that a line like "Two cages are now being constructed on the floor of the Lower Chamber" is a boffo way to announce the election of two Congressmen they dislike. They also have a fondness for little sneers toward persons and minorities which are the objects of fierce right-wing hatred. Of course, they, the sophisticated editors of *The National Review*, mean it all in fun (chuckle! chuckle!); and who among these innocent souls would ever suspect that some of their cracks might feed passions more primitive than their own for humor?

Still, the *National Review* is often amusing; it punctures many puncturable balloons, including from time to time William F. Buckley's own. Only when you remember that decisions affecting human lives may occasionally be influenced by its well-written sophisms, does appreciating the humor of the production seem about as much to the point as spending an afternoon at the Coliseum to admire the gladiators' hairstyles.

A recent issue inspires these musings, an issue in which the doughty defenders of individual rights against the encroachments of Big Government inform Mr. Nixon that, yes, he could wield emergency powers like those Mr. Trudeau has employed in Canada ("though the legal basis for his actions would be less clear-cut"); and they outline a scenario of kidnappings and bombings so that Mr. Nixon won't overlook the opportunity should it arise.

But the truly remarkable article is one entitled—with a certain, shall I say, *chutzpa*—"Should We Ditch Israel?" The answer is naturally no, but the problems of defending Israel are such that America has no alternative except . . . to invade Libya!

"America" we are told, "must discontinue its artificial and sterile abstinence and resort to aggressive war." We must "seize Libya by military force, occupy it, and if necessary drive or transport the roughly two million inhabitants of that 'nation' into Egypt."

In ways too mysterious to mention, the United States will then be able to make Russia cease supporting the North Vietnamese; profit from the SALT talks "since we will have shown ourselves not to be quite the patsies the Russians believe we are;" and do without NATO.

Other notable advantages:

1) "The internal Arab population of Israel will have had a grim alternative brought to its attention: forcible expulsion."

2) "We could threaten to place nuclear-tipped missiles in Libya. Of course, we might have promised not to; but the potential threat of breaking that promise should give the Russians something to think about. . . ."

3) "Our position in Libya could be used as a staging and base area from which to expand, or to threaten expansion, into further regions of Africa and the Middle East, as well as Eastern Europe."

4) "America will be the dominant power in the Mediterranean."

And not to be forgotten:

5) "The territory . . . contains extensive natural resources, including oil. . . . We will have acquired important new sources of revenue, extending the base for our continued economic growth. This new economic power, and especially the oil, would increase our economic leverage in Europe, . . . The development of this territory could in part be government financed, and could contribute to an economically healthy solution to our growing unemployment and welfare problems."

No drumbeat is missed in the whole tattoo of ancient alibis for colonization, from strategic needs to economic opportunities. Not Mussolini, in all his glorious fantasies of *mare nostrum*, was ever so obvious. The author concludes:

"Finally, the entire world would be faced with a new factor in strategic calculations. The United States will have engaged in territorial expansion by aggressive war. Just as the Soviets made a point in Czechoslovakia, we will have made a point in Libya, and no one will ever forget it."

We leave the author in his enthusiasm for imitating the Soviet Union, noting only that he "has served since 1965 as a private consultant to the aerospace and defense industries."

I don't think many defenders of Israel will be enamored of the gentleman's proposal, which bears about the same relationship to protecting that state's interests as the invasion of Czechoslovakia did to socialist solidarity. And please don't stoop so low as to feel outrage at the proposed invasion, conquest, and expulsion of 2 million people. (Wouldn't gas be easier?—after all, they're only Arabs.) For no doubt a future issue of the *National Review* will tell us that it was all (chuckle! chuckle!) just an idea, wasn't it?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM HERE TO '72

THE YEAR OF THE LOSERS

LIBERALISM HAS FAILED TO PROVIDE THE 'NEW POLITICS' WHICH AMERICA DEMANDS AND DESPERATELY NEEDS—A POLITICS OF DIGNITY

WILSON CAREY McWILLIAMS, HENRY PLOTKIN and WILLIAM STEVENSON

Politically, 1970 was the year of losers. Defeat, failure and inadequacy shadow all the returns; victories are uncertain, possibly pyrrhic, sometimes the source of as much gloom as the losses. The results of the election are a mandate for change, to be sure, partly a demand for new governmental policies but even more for a transformation of the style and character of American political life. Understanding that demand may be the key to success in 1972, but neither party has thus far demonstrated that it has understood, that it could or even wants to learn the meaning of the election just concluded.

The most evident defeat was suffered by the President, and not only because his campaigning appears to have been a major Democratic asset. Dick Nixon, in 1970, ran full tilt—Quixote-like—against the persistence of party identification in American politics. In the past, it has been the liberal who proclaimed that the old parties were dead, but since 1968, bemused by addlepated "strategists," the President has been striving to fashion a "new Republican majority" and he has definitively failed. In the South, lovingly cultivated for two years, the Administration scored one success in Tennessee and elsewhere met with disaster. As the *New York Times* discovered, with its usual belatedness, the majority of Southerners (especially, of course, black Southerners) are still Democrats when confronted with a choice between two parties. The old allegiance is shaken, rendered very flimsy at best, but it remains.

Not that the fact should comfort the Northern Democrats: the voters who swept Carter, Bumpers, Askew and Chiles into office, like many of their fellows in Texas, number thousands who will cheerfully vote for George Wallace again. The returns indicate only that forced to choose between a Democrat and a Republican, Southern voters are still likely to prefer the former. The Wallace *tertium* makes that choice needless, and is welcome to voters torn between sectional pride and traditional allegiance, racism and economic interest. (The same may be true of Wallace voters in the North: Senator Harrison Williams ran well in areas where Wallace had made a strong showing in '68). But from the Administration's standpoint, the potential Wallace strength is no comfort; Nixon and Agnew have gambled on being able to *win* the South, not to avoid losing it to the Democrats, and the results suggest that the gamble is a failure up to this moment.

Aside from firing Kevin Phillips, only two courses seem open to the Administration. It might try to reverse its field and abandon the "Southern strategy" altogether, but that is unlikely for two reasons: (1) it would be bitterly resented by the Republican right, which emerged, if anything, *stronger* as a result of the election, and (2) aside from strengthening Mr. Nixon's abundant reputation for opportunism, a reversal of policy would conflict with the fact that the President agrees, with the limited conviction possible for him, with the Southern strategy and what it implies. And if the Administration cannot abandon the effort to win the South, it can only move further right in a desperate effort to

WILSON CAREY MCWILLIAMS *and* HENRY PLOTKIN *teach political science at Livingston College, Rutgers University.* WILLIAM STEVENSON *is completing a dissertation in political science at Rutgers. All three were active during the last two weeks of Joseph Duffey's senatorial campaign in the state of Connecticut.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

outbid Wallace before it is too late. Since doing so would cost, and badly, outside the South, the Nixon regime may simply vacillate, annoying everyone and helping no one. But that way, as 1970 indicates, holds no hope at all for '72.

Liberal Democrats have already begun to enjoy the President's predicament. But they confront a crisis no less serious and perhaps even more difficult to resolve. Liberalism has failed to understand, much less to provide, the kind of "new politics" which America demands and desperately needs—a politics of dignity which can give to "middle Americans" and minority races alike the sense that someone cares, listens and appreciates their human value.

This was the election of the "outsider." New candidates, unscarred by the bitter frustrations and foolish rhetoric of recent years, were "marketable" everywhere. This was especially clear in the South, but it was equally evident in Buckley's victory in New York; next door in Connecticut, the shopworn Tom Dodd was far less successful. The advantage of the new candidate often outweighed the unfamiliarity of his name. He had nothing to "live down"—a period of passionate politics always leaves a legacy of recrimination and resentment—and, more important, he was a *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet on which "outsiders" among the electorate could write their own unfulfilled dreams.

Jim Buckley appealed, more successfully than the liberals and leftists ever have, to alienation. And aside from the note of prejudice in Buckley's slogan, "Isn't it time *we* had a Senator?," the feelings he spoke to belong to left-liberals and radicals more legitimately than they do to Buckley, who will merge rapidly into the conservative Republican mainstream. Buckley's success is a liberal failure as much or more than a conservative triumph.

As the campaign went on, liberals turned more and more to the issues of unemployment and inflation, the "bread and butter" concerns which Republicans seem determined to give to the Democrats. And probably there was a direct relation between the Democratic vote and the degree to which any area felt the economic bite. The ghost of Herbert Hoover still haunts the polling places (and, apparently, the economic thought of the Nixon Administration).

But in the Northeast especially, it has been made clear that economic and material appeals, calls to defend "interests" in the narrow sense, are not enough. Men are more than economic beings; my bank-balance, even my job, as liberals should not need to be told, is not *me*. In New York and Connecticut especially, but in other states as well, liberal appeals to the "economic issue" were charged with a paternalism that tainted them, often fatally. Whatever else may be true of the election, it was one which liberal patricians lost.

The case was worst in New York, where the Democratic campaign received the crushing embrace of John V. Lindsay. Over five years, Lindsay has shown himself totally unsympathetic to labor even on the narrowest economic grounds, faithful to the *Times'* editorial philosophy that can always find a public reason for opposing a strike. Other liberals, however, equaled Lindsay in their inability to comprehend or—however reluctantly one says it—to care about the working and lower middle class whites in "ethnic" America.

The failure is of vital importance. Liberals have been forced to learn that sensitivity to black demands for dignity are essential; hopefully they will learn the same lesson for white ethnic groups from 1970. There is, for example, a distinct meaning to the Italian experience in America. Most ethnic Americans remain at the bottom of the class structure and their ways, their feelings and their pride are the objects of liberal and upper class contempt. How long ago, after all, was the "Polack joke" the stock-in-trade of the intelligentsia?

Consider New York: liberals denounced "ticket balancing" as outdated and reactionary, yet, rightly, felt obliged to put Basil Patterson on the Democratic slate. While pragmatically denouncing Goodell for staying in the race, Ottinger enthusiasts might do well to ask whether Buckley's slogan would have been as effective had Paul O'Dwyer or Richard McCarthy been the Democratic candidate. In Catholic Connecticut, too, liberals may wonder if the anti-war candidate necessarily had to be a Protestant minister. How many Democrats, anywhere, made the minimal gestures which might have suggested concern for ethnic America? How many liberals noted even in passing that they felt for the plight of Czechoslovakia as much as they did for that of Vietnam? Doves in Asia but often hawks in the Middle East (as Duffey was, for example), liberals ignored Eastern Europe altogether, an affront to Slavic and Hungarian Americans they would never have visited on Jews; very few, even, mentioned Ulster. And only the rare liberal suggested that anti-Italian bias might be one ground for suspecting the F.B.I.

The "ethnic issues," however, are only symptomatic. The liberal patricians and their followers often wore a veil of strained patience with middle America that failed to hide their contempt. They came to *teach*, which was valid enough, but they refused to *learn*. Even the best missed the quality and tone of discontent. Duffey tried harder and with more success than most to reach ethnic and working-class voters; almost every voter he met thought him a "nice guy." But even Duffey seemed to find it impossible to articulate the *anger* of men who live with the impotent frustration and anxiety of impending or present lay-offs, who sense that the Administration does *not* care, and who also find the intellectual's sneer not a whit preferable to the smile on the face of the management tiger. With workers and ethnic voters already outraged at liberal cant (Whose

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

children go to school with blacks? Who has to live in or near crime-ridden neighborhoods? etc.), it hardly helped that so many campaign workers (and candidates) saw those voters through a screen of stereotypes. *Joe* and studies of "working-class authoritarianism" do not explain the aerospace and defense workers who were Duffey supporters; they do, however, deny or conceal the complex human reality of the lower and lower middle class voter himself.

Necessarily involved in the semi-alien world of ethnic and working-class America, patrician candidates and their supporters only rarely responded with the humble desire proper for guests and visitors to be instructed. Ottinger tried to compensate by a slick, saturative campaign through the media; students and other campaign workers in Connecticut—we include ourselves—disdainful of local politicians and concerns which were not *theirs* (no one is as parochial as an intellectual) more often than not tried to make the techniques of canvassing a substitute for rubbing shoulders and sharing, in some small way, the local reality. Media and techniques are powerful; they are not enough. Especially in ethnic and working-class America, men are wary; often cheated and more often deceived, they listen to the media guardedly if at all, preferring men they know and trust as guides over the erudite cosmopolites who see them only as faces in a crowd. Mayor Daley triumphantly elected Adlai Stevenson, and John Kenny contributed 70,000 votes to Senator Williams' plurality: so much for all the furor of 1968. The old machines are dying, but even in senility understand politics better than their liberal competitors.

A Loss of Will?

Perhaps as serious is the fact that liberals, students as well as others, seem to have lost the will to compete. They are willing to consign the ethnic, working-class, and even the black voter to his fate. In Connecticut, it was painfully evident that Duffey workers were dominantly either recent college graduates or high school students; the current college generation, despite a wide acceptance of the "Princeton Plan" break for elections, was notably absent. In Oberlin College, just before the elections, a young activist admitted that in that citadel of political concern perhaps a hundred students would work in campaigns and possibly a dozen might engage in left-wing protests against the election. The Movement for a New Congress conceded that participation by students fell far short of its hopes. Disillusionment might explain some of this, but the Duffey headquarters in Hartford was filled with supporters of Eugene McCarthy who have, if anyone does, reason to feel that emotion. There is a new privatism at work in America, characteristic of all liberals and leftists, not students alone. Part despair, it is equally the product of acid contempt and of the certainty that whatever the crisis of America, so long as the President's "Vietnamization" proceeds, *we* will remain immune, insulated by mobility, by affluence, by our cozy communication with each other in prestige journals, and when necessary, by drugs.

Black, ethnic and working-class Americans are not immune and are aware of the fact. The gap which separates all of them from the liberal intelligentsia is their concern for the country, one rooted in blood and sinew as well as in "ideals." And it is the curse of the liberals that those Americans are rational men, able to see behind the facade of idealism. A volunteer army, as they know very well, will not make *their* children immune, quite the contrary. As always, they will pay the costs of American policy; someone else will get the profits. The belief that Duffey advocated an "amnesty for draft dodgers" hurt him badly (and his "explanations," half-weaseling, half-affirming, only made matters worse), and not only because lower class voters knew whose children could afford to emigrate to and live in safe foreign havens. Most working-class voters we spoke to, though hostile to a general amnesty, were sympathetic to the idea of pardon for those who had served terms in jail. They wanted, these "authoritarians," only some indication that a man's convictions arose from a concern for his country rather than for himself.

All of which suggests why, if liberals and leftists can learn from 1970 rather than drowning themselves in tides of self-congratulation or mournful despair, there are grounds for hope even in the most disappointing election returns. Working-class and ethnic voters, including blacks and white Southerners, belong to the category of patriots, men who will respond only partially to the appeal of self-interest precisely because they are concerned for America as a whole. Senator Muskie's election eve address touched thousands because it spoke to memory, to pride, to the yearning for dignity and community common to all of us. And the verdict of the elections is certainly that the majority of Americans are not yet terrified into folly; the only lunacy of the campaign was found among liberal New Yorkers who, once again, preferred the satisfaction of competing egotisms to the possibility of victory. Whatever may be said of liberals and intellectuals, the "real majority" still aspires to citizenship in the old sense, to membership in a political community. Chesterton called it the "romance of America," the "pure and classical conception that no man must aspire to be anything more than a citizen, and that no man shall endure to be anything less." The patrician liberals aspired to be something more; they have been instructed that ethnic and working-class America will not endure to be less. And if liberal intellectuals will heed that teaching, they will find in the old romance something more than an excellent program for 1972; they may find a life and a purpose greater than their own pettiness and ephemerality.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE YEAR OF MURRAY CHOTINER

RICHARD NIXON WILL BE DEFEATED IN 1972 BECAUSE HE NO LONGER SPEAKS WITH THE 'MANDATE OF HEAVEN'

MICHAEL NOVAK

If 1968 was "the year of the people," 1970 was "the year of Murray Chotiner." It was a year for ideology, anger and againstness.

President Nixon achieved three remarkable successes in his hard campaigning during the last three weeks of the campaign. He shattered the image he had painstakingly been building up for at least two years: statesmanlike, presidential, sober, above comparison with Spiro Agnew. And he struck low enough below the belt to shock, alarm, and unite the Democrats as they have not been united since 1966. Thirdly, he turned the clock of his own perceptions and responses back to 1952 and 1954. The old Nixon words came out: "appeasement," "soft on," "thugs and bums"—with Reds" replaced by "students," and "commie-symps" by 'radic-libs." The campaign tactic was to run *against*—against some scapegoat, to whose crimes one linked on's opponents. The principle was: Keep the other side on the defensive, fixated on the one issue you define. The campaign weapon was "philosophical" division.

Mr. Nixon's competence as a political operator on the national scene is probably without equal. With no majority support, since 1960 no elected base, with an uncharismatic, contrived and politically unpromising personality, he has by doggedness, detailed analysis, careful execution and sheer will made himself President of the United States. (Compare, for example, his assets in the spring of 1968 to those of, say, the peace movement.) He understands the American electoral system—the details of how delegates are persuaded—as well as any American.

Mr. Nixon's political skills are flawed at two places. He knows a great deal about getting and keeping electoral favor, but little about governing; i.e., about addressing problems on their merits, apart from how voters will perceive them. Secondly, his sensitivities and perceptions are set in the world of 1954, with the mores of middle America *then* as their parameters. Every time he tries to imagine, to see, to speak, or to act, he imposes 1954 upon the present.

Experiencing Nixon as President is a little like trying to imagine that the 1960's had never happened. Hasn't he watched *Laugh-In?* Doesn't he know that stag movies are being distributed wholesale to every little town in Nebraska, Kansas and Ohio? Citizens for Decency still exist in middle America, but their leaders are now recruited from among the slightly fanatical, from those unsocialized by television, affluence, home movie cameras, travel, and daughters in bikinis. Mr. Nixon talks about pornography like one of the locker room boys who hasn't grasped the reality of sexual opportunity in the new America, or even the matter-of-factness of *Playboy*.

Has he ever listened to the speech of construction workers? Or soldiers? People are angered by public obscenities, but the anger is partly feigned. (I remember a tough grand lady from Texas, shocked almost speechless by the obscenities outside the Conrad Hilton in Chicago, 1968. It was impossible to believe that a single one of those obscenities was a stranger to her own lips.)

It is not only the question of pornography or obscenities, however. Nixon senses nothing whatever of the moral outrage about Vietnam or its tactics; about the weight of crime upon the poor; about hunger and poverty and the abuse of the environment by "the system." When he assures us that he understands, it is perfectly plain that he *doesn't* understand—neither emotionally nor conceptually. He is demonstrably *out of touch*—out of touch, not only with radical students, or the culture of the intellectuals, but with tides running strong in middle America as well.

The book by Scammon and Wattenberg, *The Real Majority,* read so avidly around the White House, served only to confuse the President's perceptions. *He* tries to understand "social unrest" through his own customary grids: The framework of "the Communist menace." (For the latter, he has recently substituted "an international tide of anarchy.") He interprets it as a *theory* working itself out in social manifestations. Thus he can detect "a moral climate" underlying it, and he can charge "unwitting" spokesmen of a "philosophy" (liberalism tarred as radical) with complicity.

Nixon failed in 1970, not through miscalculation, but through misperception. Mr. Nixon does not act like

MICHAEL NOVAK *spent the summer in Washington working with Congressional Leadership for the Future.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a man who sees everything clearly, performs a rigorous analysis, and then afterwards calculates exactly where and why he went wrong. He tries to play that *role*. But instead he acts like a man baffled by sentiments he does not, cannot, feel; a rage he can detect without being able to detect its source; political potency he knows is there, whose handle he cannot quite find. The world of middle America he claims to know so well ("I know the heart of America") is, in fact, in its own secret recesses no longer innocent. ("And I know that heart is good.") Americans are not now so certain of their innocence. They cannot bear too much accusation. But the assurances of 1954 no longer assuage the soul, not even of those in the small towns of the West, whose hands are rough and whose speech is masculine, defiant, strong on "law and order."

Liked, but Not Well Liked

Mr. Nixon has never been an entirely popular, loved, or trusted man. The *Wall Street Journal* not long after his election described the thinness of the affection with which he was regarded even by those who voted for him, and suggested that he had a smaller margin for error than most Presidents could count on. His native caution and chosen tactic of "cooling the rhetoric" gave many Americans a feeling of relief. So also did the easily discernible contrast between him and Agnew, whom he assigned the role of court jester and lightning rod (a role which Agnew himself is intelligent enough to resent, even in the gratitude he feels for sudden prominence.) In their gratitude, they rated him as high as Presidents much more loved than he.

As Sargent Shiver was the first to discern, there is something of the undertaker in Nixon. Imagine a man who every day, no matter what his own joy or despair, is obliged to speak somberly and unctuously to people suddenly caught in unaccustomed grief. He does not allow his own feelings to show. His gait must not be sprightly. The shoulders acquire a peculiar stiffness. Gestures reveal an obligatory passage through the controlling brain: stiff, choppy, clearly contrived. Even the warmth is learned. Even the sincerity is professional—really *good* professional. Pieties of speech become a habit. "Doesn't the deceased look lovely now? Better even than he looked in life."

By a sheer effort of imagination and bluff, a minority President—a man who for two decades has never tasted the approval of a majority— has invented "a silent majority." (A kind of "fifth column," meant to strike terror into opponents' hearts by its very invisibility.) America is a nation of minorities, in which the prospect of isolation is unpleasant; the image of a "mainstream" has long attracted members of the lonely crowd. Few like to think they lie outside the sensible, decent majority. Few like to be caught in the pose of the "kook" or the extremist. The creation of the image of a "silent majority," without any proof that such a majority exists, is the most brilliant achievement of Nixon's two years in office. Power comes from the barrel of a symbol.

The second barrel of Nixon's symbolic creation has not been quite as successful, but it has suceeded. In one single speech, just before the November moratorium in 1969, Nixon changed the connotations and context of the public use of the word "moral." For years, all through my childhood, I recall that that word belonged to Protestant temperance workers, John Foster Dulles, the Legion of Decency, proper businessmen, and small-town Rotarians. John F. Kennedy outflanked that usage by exalting the pragmatic, the profane, and the secular—furnishing the symbol which Harvey Cox was to articulate in *The Secular City*. The universe of spirit and idealism shifted from small-town rural Protestant to big city, university, technological—a celebration of new liberties, an invitation to new disciplines.

Eugene McCarthy despised the new technocracy as a philosophy. Erich Fromm, for example, perceived the shift from a Kennedy to a McCarthy universe as a shift from love of death to love of life, from machine and calculation to people and hope. McCarthy brought the word "moral" back into common political usage. He spoke of a "constituency of conscience." He appealed not to some mass migration toward some "new frontier," but to a faith and a hope and a standard of judgment already present in millions of hearts. "The people" found *him*, everyone liked to say, *he* was not some new Moses with uplifted arm.

Bobby Kennedy had a somewhat different sense of "moral": harsher, more passionate, more demanding. "We must do better." Indians, Chicanos, the poor—there was always a sense of shock, and outrage, and the *obligation* to be restless, competitive, and "doing better." R.F.K. was more of a Protestant than McCarthy. (When a Kennedy speaks, he makes his listeners feel guilty.) In any case, suddenly in 1968 (the radical students, of course, had been giving new content to "moral" since the teach-ins of 1965), it was all right to be "moral." It wasn't like being for Prohibition, Decency, and proper virtues. It was caring passionately about politics and social change.

With one speech, Nixon branded such usage a minority view, a disruptive, extremist, and self-righteous view. The vast majority of Americans, he said, were *already* good: law-abiding, tax-paying, decent, hard-working. *That* is morality. Demonstrations in the streets, social restlessness, disproportionate outrage—these are signs of feverishness and lack of patriotism. From that time onward, the peace movement has been going downhill. Nixon captured the sense of "the right and the fitting" for *his* policies. He threw everyone else on the defensive. He became the public oracle of wisdom and morality. His deeds (troop withdrawals, a visible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

winding down of war operations and casualties) gave him increased credibility.

But the instant Nixon committed himself to the bitter ideological warfare that he had already sent Agnew out to begin in this electoral campaign, the old image of Nixon as the moral-political crusader of 1948 and 1952 and 1954 came back into focus. More subtly done, without the ideological edge and the growing desperation, the Nixon-Agnew campaign might have succeeded. (By mid-October, the ecstatic expectations of Republican control of the Senate had given way to the plausibility of Democratic *gains*—Gore was coming up, Duffey was ahead, Tydings seemed safe, Hoff was neck-and-neck, Hruska was in trouble, and all over the country Democratic Senators were pulling even or ahead.) The Washington *Star* cited evidence that the

Trog, *Daily Mail*, London

vaunted "political history" that Agnew was supposed to make, unleashing a conservative tide that would sweep the working man into the Republican party, was turning into boredom for Agnew and his audiences and a backlash among the voters. (A number of candidates suddenly wanted Agnew to stay *out*, or at least tread very lightly in their states.) On the same day, conservatives like Kevin Phillips and Lee Auspitz and the liberal Ripon society blasted Nixon for squandering the greatest opportunity in recent Republican history. From left and right, they predicted disaster in 1970 and a new Republican candidate in 1972.

Just at that time the first notices of Nixon's immensely accelerated campaign schedule appeared in the press. What Agnew had failed to do, Nixon would attempt. The mathematics of the situation left nothing to lose. Republican losses would be "normal" in an off-year election. And Nixon would get credit in the party for laying his own body on the line. Every success would be due, at least in part, to his last-ditch efforts. Incredibly, *no* Republican candidate in sixteen Senate races designated crucial eighteen months before was safely ahead.

The mathematics of 1970 were unusual. The Republicans will not have such an opportunity again for many years. (1) The Democrats were almost as bitterly broken and divided by 1968 as the Republicans had been in 1964. (2) The Democrats were nine million dollars in debt, the Republicans eleven million in the black and projecting a comfortable eighteen million in the *national* party coffers by mid-October—with millions more pledged to individual candidates. (Clement Stone of Chicago personally pledged a five-million dollar fund, raised by himself, with a million of his own and two million if necessary guaranteed at once for candidates like Murphy and Bush.)

(3) The power of new techniques in television had made huge sums of money indispensable as never before. The campaign of 1970 would be won or lost—it was sincerely believed—on TV. (4) Of the 35 Senate seats to be contested, 25 were held by Democrats—the Democrats would have to win 25 of 35 *just to stay even.* (5) At least 16 Democratic Senate seats were, for assorted local reasons, unusually vulnerable—incumbents were retiring, or behind at the start.

(6) Of the 435 house races, only 4 seats had come in on Nixon's coattails in 1968—there was very little Republican "fat" for the Democrats to trim away. True, several Republican seats were given up by candidates for the Senate—but in New York alone, Ottinger and McCarthy had similarly given up seats, and Lowenstein's district had been conclusively gerrymandered. The House, too, could show Republican gains of 10 or 20 seats.

Faced with these mathematics, a group of fairly desperate Democrats appealed, for example, to Sargent Shriver to come home from France and lend his visibility and talents to giving at least some protection to Democratic congressmen. In late June, when Shriver consented, the situation looked rather bleak. I recall very well meeting with Mr. Shriver and his advisers in the early days of July, and beginning to travel with him around the country. Informants at the White House, the Pentagon, and the State Department reported to us snatches of conversation which revealed how matter-of-factly high Republicans were talking: "When we reorganize the Senate. . . . When we have the votes after the election. . . ." The list of Democratic Senators who might go under easily revealed the specter of an 18-17 split in the 35 races—seven more Republicans, and Republican control. All the committees—and important subcommittees on migrant farmers, auto controls, the elderly, the environment, and hunger—would pass into Republican hands.

In the tourist section of a commercial plane, Mr. Shriver ripped out a page of *Life* and handed it to me: an account of Agnew's Air Force jet, its built-in library, copying equipment, stable of speech-writers, advisers and auxiliary staff. There was nothing even remotely to match that on the Democratic side—nothing to match, either, the daily front-page reports and frequent two-minutes on TV for every single Agnew speech. No matter what Mr. Shriver would say—and other Democrats increasingly felt the same powerless-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness—almost none of it would get national reportage. The Republicans were running a two-level strategy: The evocation of a new national ideological tide, and a highly financed, closely supervised local assault on local grievances.

The national Republican strategy foundered on two misperceptions. First, a strategy of being *against* (Murray Chotiner's famous theory) will not work if over-exposure too early releases pent-up angers and resentments. By early October, the voters had heard their own resentment and rage (these have been real enough) voiced to their hearts' content. But what were Nixon and Agnew *offering* as an alternative to such disagreeable feelings? The self-image of Americans is that they are a good, generous people ("the American heart is good"); they don't feel comfortable when they feel anger and hatred and division all the time. It isn't *American*.

Moreover, if there is "social unrest" in America, *that* isn't part of the American dream. So if you keep emphasizing the unrest, but offering no dream and no concrete projects in whose accomplishment all Americans can regain their sense of pride, the voters can't help transferring their dislike for themselves onto *you*. That, I believe, accounts for the great emotion of release we discovered everytime Mr. Shriver quietly spoke of Mr. Agnew as "the great divider," or accused Nixon of making "the Goldwater mistake." Even Republican audiences (candidates often scheduled Shriver for their Republican or Independent audiences), which we were warned wouldn't appreciate attacks on Nixon or Agnew, applauded with tangible relief when Agnew's ideological divisiveness was deplored.

Americans do not *like* division. They do not associate "social unrest" with America. It is not an issue that can be successfully played upon (unless other circumstances enter in) if played too hard. A few hints are better than broadsides. But what is indispensable is a promise of *healing*. To be sure, the traditional liberal compassion and "understanding" aren't enough. Alone, these constitute "permissiveness," chronic liberal mushiness and sentimentality. People hunger to know *why*. *How* could it happen here? "America" and "social unrest" are contradictions in terms.

Senator Muskie's election-eve address was brilliant especially in those parts in which he began to explain how and why such unrest has come to be. It weakened when he did not propose, even briefly, a positive strategy for beginning to heal the disease. One began to hear Nixon's rebuttal: "But Muskie has no strategy except more money, more sympathy, more welfare—we *know* those won't work, those have been tried, those have failed. Give *our* strategy a chance. [Even if we don't actually have one.]"

The second reason why the national Republican strategy did not give shape to the "great tide" of conservative sentiment is that there is, in fact, no such tide. Scammon and Wattenberg neglect to note the pride the Dayton machinist's wife takes in being generous, in "seeing things the other fellow's way," in judging that where there's smoke (unrest) there must be fire: *Something* must be causing it. And, granted American optimism, that something must be curable. Americans are not *against* the young, the poor and the black.

In a word, Americans are angry at radical students, yes. But why? The students have exposed realities about America that many have not ever been prepared to face: that Americans can be mistaken, evil, cruel, stupid, destructive, repressive, etc.

Yet, Americans long to be able to accept the fact that Americans are like all other men, that we are not and cannot be as "good," or "innocent," as our mythology describes us to ourselves. We are roughly as corrupt as all other human beings have ever been, will ever be. There is nothing actually terrifying in these truisms, unvoiced as they seem to be. *Americans desperately long to be allowed to become mature.* We desperately long for leaders who tell us the truth about ourselves. We are both evil *and* good. Guilt need not incapacitate us. The strain of trying to appear to ourselves as wholly good is getting to be too much to bear.

What people admire in Spiro Agnew is that "he speaks his mind." (He has "the courage to say what Nixon thinks.") They don't always like what's on Agnew's mind. But what Agnew says does represent confused feelings of their own. Unlike Agnew, many aren't *happy* to be feeling or thinking such things. They want someone who can show them how to do otherwise.

The office of the Presidency in the United States is primarily a teacher's office. The *symbolic* functions of the Presidency now surpass in potency his *executive* functions. As John Kennedy discovered, the President can't *do* all that much. But he focuses a people's spirit, as kings used to do. ("King Richard" fits Nixon's actual practice with striking aptness—he treats even the Congress as an instrument of his will.)

Richard Nixon will be defeated in 1972 because he no longer speaks with the "mandate of heaven." (Paul Mus) He does not focus the American spirit. Even his supporters are unhappy and uncertain. Life in America is not in tune with America's destiny, with her stars, with the new turn of the wheel of history. "Social unrest" is a sign from the heavens. *This* is not America.

What America will be, what constitutes "being in tune with" her destiny, is what the election of 1972 will be about. An unhappy people, angry and divided amongst themselves, feed upon their own frustrations. Nixon knows nothing of the 1970's. The closest he comes to vision are his two slogans, "Bring us together" and "A generation of peace." That these are slogans merely, and neither vision nor strategy, is proved daily by his regression to metaphors of the 1950's.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Politicians and commentators in America do not, as the Vietnamese do, pay sufficient attention to symbolic factors and the life of the spirit. Their pragmatism is too materialistic: the economy, polls, party organization. All these things are crucial. But add one more to the list: "The right man at the right place"—a symbolic matter, touching the communal soul.

No tide emerged to give Nixon's mediocre spirit the stamp of majority approval. In the Senate alone, Gore's vote will be taken up by Stevenson, Tydings' by Tunney; Bentsen's Democratic conservatism will be balanced by Weicker's liberal Republicanism; Taft will most likely vote rather like Saxbe—with the liberals on many issues so ideologically important to the President (ABM, Supreme Court); and if Buckley proves to be an intelligent conservative, his contribution from the northeastern conservative establishment will enlighten all America.

President Nixon lacks "soul" to such an exquisitely painful degree that in 1970, when he dropped Spiro Agnew like a ventriloquist's puppet and spoke in his own harsh voice, he instantly revived his earlier incarnation as "Tricky Dick." In 1968, Nixon received two million *less* votes than in 1960, 43 per cent of the total. Given unity among his opponents, he is exceedingly vulnerable. In September a Harris poll showed Nixon's strength against Muskie exactly where they ended in 1968—43%. And without any special exposure at all, Muskie *already* showed an equal 43%.

Nixon takes the nation backwards into the 1950's. If Senator Muskie has the "soul," he will defeat Nixon handily. Somewhere, there is a man more in tune with "the mandate of heaven" than Mr. Nixon has shown himself. That man will be President in 1972. Nixon, of course, is very smart, and this article is written to help him once again to readjust his image—in the full knowledge that even that, this time, will not be enough. Nixon faces, now, crisis number *X*.

FOREBLOOM

EDMUND PENNANT

I read the sear cinquefoil
handwave through bullfrog's eye:
farewell July;

Farewell forebloom of Autumn
rippling in goldenrod.
Goodbye, my God,

Goodbye. And hail, chastising
silence. Again the face
under the ice.

SAME OLD NEW HERO

THE STAGE

On Tralfamadore, Billy Pilgrim discovered, "books were laid out— in brief clumps of symbols separated by stars"; each clump, the voice explained, "is a brief, urgent message—describing a situation, a scene." This bit of interplanetary local color from *Slaughterhouse-Five* is not so much a scifi invention as it is a description by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. of his own technique as a writer. Of course, unlike the Tralfamadorians, we Earthlings, unable to read all the clumps at once, are forced to take them seriatim. On the page or on the stage. The theater, which has always been addicted to such clumps, has its own terminology for the phenomena—*bits, turns*. Essentially, Vonnegut's first play, *Happy Birthday, Wanda June,* is a collection of bits although they are clustered around the most obvious plot line Vonnegut has used since *Player Piano* (1952), a development that is not surprising since *Wanda June* is a revision of a ten-year-old play called *Penelope*.

The plot, as Vonnegut admits (*New York Times*, October 25) and as his heroine's name proclaims, is borrowed from Homer, although his "hero-warrior" is as much Ernest Hemingway as he is Odysseus. In this variation on the *Odyssey,* Harold Ryan, bigtime killer (soldier, hunter, adventurer), comes home to find his Penelope besieged by only two suitors and this time the legendary slaughter never takes place. There is a standoff. What is more, the play's Telemachos, a pre-adolescent stage child, begins in the best Homeric tradition as his father's ally, but then deserts him in disgust. And this Penelope, who has been busy with her mind instead of her distaff, no longer the carhop Harold married, is unable to accept his simple raw-meat image of himself.

"It's a pacifist play and I am a pacifist," Vonnegut told a group of college editors before the play opened (*34th Street,* October 1) and although he hedged on the second label both designations are presumably true. *Wanda June* is certainly pacifist at least to the extent that it relentlessly repeats Vonnegut's familiar insistence that man is beset by mortality, so much a victim of chance (Wanda June is run down by an ice cream truck) that man's violence is an unnecessary and idiotic assist to an accidental universe. The difficulty with the play, as with *Slaughterhouse-Five,* the novel about the Dresden fire-bombing that Vonnegut has been trying to write ever since he survived that disaster, is that the repetition is finally tiresome, never a strategic building of horror. To make matters worse, the chummy glimpses of the dead at play in heaven, even though it is a device and not a theological statement and even though there are specific lines in the play that deny the heaven, tend

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to drain death and destructon of significance. The play is saved if it *is* saved, by Vonnegut's oblique sense of humor, the arrival of an unexpected funny line that momentarily distracts the audience, lets the playgoer catch his breath for a second before Vonnegut leans on him again and hums the same old refrain in his ear. I must admit, however, that as I write this, almost three weeks after I saw the play, the comic lines have all gone out of my head. What stays is the man's insistence.

Since the production was a good one for the most part and since I could hardly help but nod my approval of the reiterated non-violence bromides, I was left to respond to the play as play. I sat there torn between amusement and a desire to tell Vonnegut to let go the lapels. Then came the end, the showdown between Ryan and Penelope's pacifist suitor, and the whole thing seems to move into a new, deeper vein. After Dr. Woodly faces up to Ryan, the killer-soldier, unmanned by a new kind of weapon, goes off-stage. A shot is heard and then Ryan reappears, "I missed." I was startled to find that Clive Barnes thought the end a trick. I was surprised to discover that most reviewers assumed that the play was a victory for the pacifist thought embodied in Dr. Woodly. I was appalled to see Vonnegut, in the *Times* interview, giving aid and comfort to that reading of the play by explaining that the play is "about a new kind of American hero—the hero who refuses to kill" and implying that the ending is irrelevant in his account of how it was changed night after night during previews. Woodly is that kind of pacifist hero, but I take him for a failed hero and find the point of the play in that ending. Even though Woodly will not kill, when he chooses to face up to Ryan, as Penelope says, he accepts Ryan's world, Ryan's values. He still has to feed his male pride by showing himself the big boy on the block. That last scene is a variation on the end of so many Western movies, the kind of good guy-bad guy confrontation that has left so many White Hats, personal and national, standing with smoking guns over dead bodies. When Ryan comes back on the stage just before the curtain, I hear his "I missed" not as a joke but as an admission that, though fashions change, the inherent American (human?) violence does not.

If that is in fact what *Wanda June* is up to, it is hardly the simple message play that it seems to be for most of the evening. It is another confirmation of the pessimism that has marked all of Vonnegut's work from the beginning. It is a metaphor for a fact of American life, of American thought, that haunts us all continually. It was on my mind when I went into the theater, for just that morning I had been reading Jimmy Breslin's piece on Bella Abzug in *New York* (October 5). It is true that Breslin is a case of literary arrested development, caught at the level of the old Edmund Lowe-Victor McLaglen battling buddy movies, and may be inventing an Abzug all his own, but I was sickened by the quotations that he put in or took out of her mouth. Of a Jewish Defense League picket that accused her of being against Israel, Bella is supposed to have said to a young follower, "Hit that bastard in the mouth for me. I can't do it where people see me." A Peace candidate, for God's sake! Am I just being oversensitive to rhetoric, I wondered, and then from the stage of the Theatre de Lys a voice seemed to be saying, *it isn't rhetoric, it's reality, and it's killing us all,* and I found myself ready to forgive the imperfections in the play just to hear that voice crying in our wilderness.

Now it turns out that I may simply have invented a *Wanda June* of my own. The play Vonnegut discusses in the *Times* sounds less interesting and less important than the one that seemed finally to be born at the de Lys in the last few minutes of the action. I advise any interested readers to drop by the theater and find out just whose play is being done down there. After all, Vonnegut may have assumed some kind of pose in simplifying his play for an interviewer and in sprinkling his words to the college editors with amiable touches of self-mockery, but, as he himself said, in the introduction to the 1966 edition of *Mother Night,* "We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." So it goes.

GERALD WEALES

MADNESS AND REVOLUTION

THE SCREEN

Accomplished tennis players are seldom good at squash because these sports are too much alike. The differences in timing and racket swing seem too subtle. The similarities between the two sports confound the player's need to discriminate between them. The same might be said of acting for the stage and acting for the screen. Screen performances are usually judged as if they'd been done on a stage, and neither actors nor critics are very sharp at seeing the differences between the two mediums. But there is a difference between a great stage role and a great screen role. And an actor's ability to tell them apart, and act accordingly, is the pre-requisite of a great screen performance. Roles played on the stage can be larger than life only so long as they're still in proportion, for the stage is a classical medium, a fixed frame of reference. A great screen role is more often, a psychological grotesque. It's larger than life all right, but larger in a distorted, distended fashion. It's all out of proportion in a way that makes it dramatically presentable only in an anamorphic frame of reference.

Sue Kaufman's *Diary of a Mad Housewife* contains such a role, and Richard Benjamin has given a great

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

screen performance in it. The role is Jonathan Balser, a social-climbing New York lawyer who's the very soul of pomposity. From morning to night Jonathan delivers unsolicited monographs on what a fine life he's living. He lectures his children on wines at Thanksgiving dinner in as facile a tone as he invites his wife to "a roll in de hay" every night. He holds such sway over his household that even his pre-pubescent daughter speaks of sex with comparable priggishness. In brief, Jonathan would be at home in any Dickens novel.

On a stage, where we always see the action in a long shot, a role like this would have to be underplayed and softened. (Many Pinter characters are in fact movie roles with the underplaying written in.) But Benjamin has the good screen sense to be unabashed in his role. He plays Jonathan in a mood that's almost chipper, and leaves it to the camera, ably maneuvered by director Frank Perry, to complement his performance. The result is devastating.

The rest of the film's material doesn't measure up, even though Carrie Snodgrass is almost as good in her role as Jonathan's mad housewife, Tina. Tina is mad by virtue of being the one sane person in Jonathan's mad world. Her submission to Jonathan's indomitable will isn't so much passive as impassive—a response dictated by insight and fatalism rather than an inability to cope. What diminishes the role of Tina is the affair to escape Jonathan, to get out of the apartment during a period he's home sick. But when the affair proves as futile as her marriage, her lover is up-screened by a hair ribbon she finds in his pocket. This discovery excuses her from the affair on the grounds that he's a part-time homosexual, as if that were an unforgivable crime against humanity. In a world where there are men like Jonathan, it's hard to believe such an ordinary perversion could offend her so much.

A fine performance also distinguishes Gillo Pontecorvo's *Burn!* The performance is Marlon Brando's as Sir William Walker, a British *agent provocateur* sent to a Portuguese colony in the Caribbean during the early 1880's. Because the British want to exploit trade there, Walker tutors a Negro named Jose Dolores (Evaristo Marquez) first in banditry, then in revolution. But before Dolores' revolution is even complete, Walker betrays it into the hands of English merchants who're to be the island's neo-colonial governors. Within ten years Dolores is back in the hills, initiating a revolution on his own this time, and Walker must be called back as a counter-insurgency expert to defeat for good the man whom he originally taught the arts of revolution.

Burn! is in many ways reminiscent of Pontecorvo's earlier *The Battle of Algiers.* In that film French troops conduct a campaign of torture that the Algerian F.L.N. answers with an escalated campaign of terror. Pontecorvo clearly sympathizes with the motives for the latter, and despises the former. But he also recognizes the sense in which violence transcends ideology, and he acknowledges the sheer suffering, on both sides, that a revolution causes. In *The Battle of Algiers* this unsentimental compassion of his is suggested by a solemn music that recurs whenever the violence flares up, no matter which side is the perpetrator and which is the victim. In *Burn!* the scoring is the same.

The point is Pontecorvo doesn't delude himself that his political enemy is a paper tiger. He sees that enemy as a man. Yet his commitment isn't shaken: seeing the bloodshed for what it is, he's not less determined to help bring it about if he can. Therefore he's not a paper tiger either, as most self-styled radical directors are. If you don't believe a film can have real political consequences, look around. *The Battle of Algiers* has been a handbook, although a badly misread one, for the wave of terrorist bombings in America today.

Compared to *The Battle of Algiers, Burn!* is a more thoroughly humanized, though not a more humanitarian film. The earlier film was based on some given facts of history, but *Burn!* isn't, for Portugal never had a Caribbean colony. This time Pontecorvo has made up the historical scenario as well as the cinematic one. The advantage is that he's better able to situate the historical and political issues in the personal lives of the characters. Ali le Pointe, the F.L.N. hero of the earlier film, never meets face to face the French colonel who's his adversary. But Dolores and Walker have a complex intimacy from the start. The contradiction that exists in Walker's career between his two visits to the island is embodied in Jose Dolores. Dolores gives that contradiction a life and a will of its own. He also realizes that though he won't have a chance to kill Walker, the contradiction itself will do so by another man's hand. In the end Dolores has done little more than sacrifice himself to an historical process. But Pontecorvo believes that's enough: that's all Ali le Pointe did in *The Battle of Algiers.*

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BELVEDERE

JOHN KOLARS

The bay is grained like wood,
Laid in long parallels,
And nearer in, knotted waters on the rock,
As roots curl around and hold
Things semi-seen, unseen, sea-wanted.

The blue grain is defined
By these three points:
Something, too far to be seen,
Something, far back behind me,
Something, older than water.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

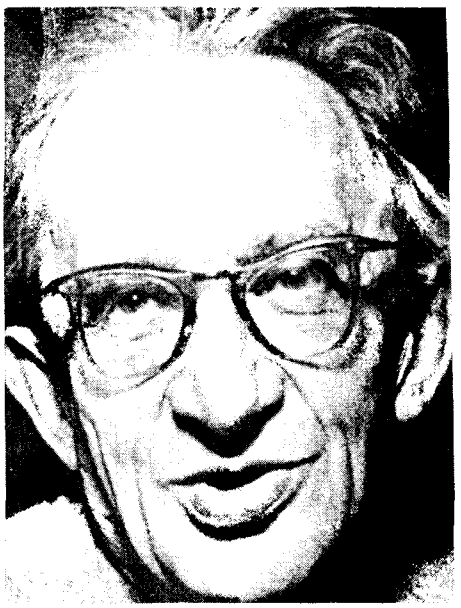
BOOKS

The Marxism of George Lukacs and Merleau-Ponty—at last

George Lukacs
GEORGE LICHTHEIM
Viking, $4.95; paper $1.65

Georg Lukacs, The Man, His Work And His Ideas
EDIT. G. H. R. PARKINSON
Random House, $7.95; Vintage, $1.95

DAVID GROSS



For some time now, Georg Lukács has been a figure of unusual importance among leftists in the West, though many have not known exactly why they feel such veneration. For those who have read him in the original German (or Hungarian) it may be the difficulty of comprehending his often obscure prose that makes him seem unapproachably profound. To those who have not read much of him at all, it may be precisely his Central European "distance" and distinguished reputation as one of the greatest living Marxists that have caused him to be enveloped in an aura of exceptional respect.

Still, to many in the English-speaking world it may not be clear at first sight why Lukács is held in such high esteem. Those of his works which have been translated are almost exclusively literary, and even then not the best ones which could have been chosen. Thus, for example, his *Studies in European Realism* has appeared, but not his early and brilliant *Theory of the Novel.* And similarly *The Historical Novel,* written in Russia in the 1930's, is widely available, but not a work such as his very interesting and insightful study of *The Young Hegel* (1948).

To some extent these oversights are just now being remedied. A publication of what is certainly Lukács' most important work, *History and Class Consciousness,* is due to appear in England this fall, as well as a collection of some hitherto untranslated literary essays. In this country a few of Lukács' political and cultural essays are beginning to crop up here and there, but many more still need to be brought forth. When this happens, it is likely that the respect for Lukács which is now often a little nebulous will then be placed upon more solid foundations—that is to say, grounded in a real knowledge of the whole of his thought, and not on haphazard impressions.

In the meantime, two books *on* Lukács have recently appeared which at least introduce the reader to the man himself if not to the complexities and depth of his thought.

George Lichtheim's short *Georg Lukács* is the first. As a brief summary of Lukács' life and thought the book is adequate. For the most part the treatment is balanced and on the whole fair (which is an improvement over Lichtheim's earlier, more hostile views of his subject). Especially satisfactory is the discussion of Lukács' political-ideological development after 1917, particularly his involvement in Hungarian revolutionary politics and his later Stalinist compromises. Likewise, Lichtheim is adept at handling, in summary fashion, some of the literary and aesthetic contributions of Lukács, and he very skillfully roots these in the social *milieu* from which they emerged —whether it be Russia in the middle '30s, or Hungary in the middle '50s.

Nonetheless, the book does suffer from shortcomings. For one thing, it is primarily descriptive, not analytical; rather than grapple with ideas and thereby take the reader into the heart of Lukács' thought, Lichtheim has chosen to be discursive and expository. The result is that one feels he is skirting, instead of getting into, the matter at hand. Then, too, a considerable effort is made to "locate" Lukács with relation to others, to see where he "fits in" with comparable thinkers of the age. Although this is interesting and informative (for example, one learns how much Lukács was influenced by such figures as Dilthey, Sorel, Hegel, ant, and Szabó, the Hungarian anarcho-syndicalist), still it is an approach which prevents Lichtheim from cutting through to the essence of Lukács' thought, to the richness and insightfulness of many of his ideas. "We see a thousand relations," Lukács wrote in an early work, "yet never grasp a *genuine connection.*" Precisely the same might be said about Lichtheim's study: the information *about* Lukács is there, but not a real feel for what Lukács is trying to convey.

The second work, *Georg Lukács, the Man, His Work, and His Ideas,* fills in, in many ways, the sketch provided by Lichtheim. However, it ought to be pointed out that the title is somewhat misleading. The comprehensiveness which it seems to promise is not there since the various essays focus almost exclusively on Lukács the literary and aesthetic theorist. The *other* Lukács—the Marxist strategist and political thinker—is virtually left out of the picture, except insofar as his politics had a bearing on his literary work. This is unfortunate since it leads to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

impression that the "bad" or dangerous side of Lukács is being adumbrated so as not to offend public taste. Consciously or unconsciously there seems to be an attempt to de-politicize Lukács as much as possible, to dress him up and make him presentable to a cultured audience. The general tone of the book is therefore one-sidedly aesthetic; even the contributors appear, for the most part, to be literary critics who have joined together to write approvingly about an eccentric member of their profession.

The one outstanding exception is the first essay in the collection by István Mészáros, a former assistant to Lukács at the University of Budapest. In an incomparably fine piece entitled "Lukács' Concept of the Dialectic," Mészáros makes a genuinely important contribution to the understanding of both Lukács' aesthetics and his political thought. He does this by bringing out the crucial significance of "mediation" within the larger notion of dialectics. Mediation is the essential middle term between immediate and ultimate aims, or in literature and art between pure immediacy and pure abstraction. Without it not only does the dialectical view of society falter, but also the way is left open for the decomposition of aesthetics and even the "tragedy of the concentration camps." It is too much to summarize the complexities of Mészáros' analysis here: suffice it to say that he makes a solid contribution to any further Lukács studies by pointing out that "mediation" is a centrally important concept in Lukács' dialectic (and not simply "totality" as had usually been stressed before).

After Mészáros' essay the others seem pedestrian by comparison. The contribution of H. A. Hodges is wholly inadequate—in fact, not much more than a summary of Lukács' *The Destruction of Reason*. The essay by G. H. Parkinson discusses, with perhaps too much scholarly baggage, Lukács' theory of "speciality" *(Besonderheit)*, while Roy Pascal's piece on "totality" and A. G. Lehmann's on "The Marxist as Literary Critic" both make good points without coming to noteworthy conclusions. By the time one comes to David Craig's contribution (again on Lukács' view of literature) it becomes clear that the essays begin to be repetitive. With the Craig essay this may bring the reader to the point of exasperation for there is no evidence that he has any special knowledge of Lukács or even that he has read him very thoroughly. The last piece by Stanley Mitchell (on the concept of the "Beautiful") raises the tone somewhat, but by and large the major part of the collection leaves much to be desired in terms of what can be learned about Lukács' thought as a whole.

These two books, in spite of their limitations, could signal the beginning of a Lukács' revival in this country, but hopefully one that would center upon Lukács the political as well as the aesthetic theorist. The time is long past when he can be considered *merely* a European curiosity. The fact is, he often speaks as directly to our own condition of crisis, break-up, and new beginnings as he once did to a similar European *Auflösungszeit*. His solutions may not always be acceptable, but his views certainly deserve a complete hearing.

Humanism and Terror

MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY
TRANS. JOHN O'NEILL

Beacon Press, $7.50

DICK HOWARD

It is significant that during the days of the existentialism business on U.S. campuses, the most serious existentialist attempts to come to grips with Marxist theory and Communist practice were not made available to the American public. (Besides the present book, I am thinking particularly of Merleau-Ponty's *Les aventures de la dialectique* [1955] and Sartre's very important *Critique de la raison dialectique* [1960].)

The paradoxes of a Kierkegaard or a Nietzsche; the Christian mysticism of a Marcel or a Berdayev; the drama of Sartre's theater and the abstraction of his ontology; the strict phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty's earlier works; and especially the absurd of Camus, "falling" into a mystique of confession and resignation—these were permitted and peddled, while the essentially political motivations of the modern existentialist movement remained hidden. With the growth of a New Left on the campus during the 1960's, the political impulse of existentialism revealed itself in practice; and the publishing business found a new market.

Humanism and Terror appears at first as a polemic against Arthur Koestler's version of Marxism. "Since the publication of *Darkness at Noon*," writes Merleau-Ponty, "there is not an educated man in the Anglo-Saxon world or in France who is not in agreement with the goals of the Marxist revolution, regretting only that Marxism should pursue such noble ends through such ignoble methods." Yet, although Koestler "raises the problem of our times," there is "very little Marxism" in his work. Koestler's "Marxism" is mechanistic, not dialectical; it makes Marxism a "rigorous science," a "sort of sociological scientism," "the summary logic of the technician who deals only with inert objects which he manipulates as he pleases." With Koestler, "history is no longer what it was for Marx: the manifestation of human values through a process which might involve dialectical detours but at least could not entirely ignore human purposes. . . . It becomes an external force," for Koestler "has never given much thought to the simple idea of a dialectic in history."

Through an examination of the actual comportment of Bukharin (the model of Koestler's Rubashov) at the Moscow Trials, Merleau-Ponty attempts to understand the Marxist project, its view of history and revolution and its attitude towards violence. The Moscow Trials, in which virtually all of the old-guard Bolsheviks confessed to crimes against the socialist fatherland, were not ordinary trials; they "only make sense between revolutionaries, that is to say between men who

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are convinced that they are *making history*." Bukharin's confession can be explained only if it is recalled that he was a Marxist, and that for him history was at once an objective force with its own direction *and* the result of the subjective action of man: "the act of revolution presents itself both as the creation of history and as the truth of history in relation to its total meaning." For the Marxist, it is not a question of judging one's acts in terms of subjective intention, or of past results; revolutionary justice adopts the future as its standard, and the revolutionary future is the revolution, the instauration of the humanist society. Bukharin confessed because he understood that objectively he had endangered the revolution; he did not kneel down before Stalinism, but before the inexorable development of history; and his ethic remained that of the proletarian, not that of the yogi.

Merleau-Ponty's treatment of Marxism is tinged with "existentialist" motifs—motifs which are also those of Marx. A major theme of the book is the problem of revolutionary violence and its justification. "All we know," argues Merleaux-Ponty, "is different kinds of violence and we ought to prefer revolutionary violence because it has a future of humanism."

"We do not have a choice between purity and violence but between different kinds of violence. Inasmuch as we are incarnate beings, violence is our lot."

We have to choose, to act, and "as soon as we begin to live, we lose the alibi of good intentions."

The ethics of bourgeois liberalism are shown to be the hollow ethics of the Master, dominating a society of Slaves —Slaves, however, who must (and this is a dialectical, an historical "must") revolt against the empty domination and false morality of the Masters. "To tell the truth and to act out of conscience are nothing but alibis of a false morality; true morality is not concerned with what we think or what we want but obliges us to take an historical view of ourselves."

Yet, as Marx and the existentialists know, history is contingent, and its dialectical development defies precise prophecy. To the revisionist Kautsky's argument against the Russian Revolution, that "one should know something about a locomotive before setting it in motion," Trotsky replied that "if one waits to get to know a horse before mounting, one never mounts. . . . Thus history is not comparable to a machine but to a living being. There is a science of the revolution, but there is also a revolutionary *praxis* which that science clarifies but does not replace." Indeed, the problem of the later Trotsky was his refusal to acknowledge the contingency of history, his "Kantian" reasoning which became utopian because not connected to historical reality. Like his Stalinist opponents, Trotsky forgot that the motor of the Marxian dialectic is the praxis of the proletariat, a praxis which ultimately depends on the contingency of its class-consciousness.

Marxian Philosophy

Merleau-Ponty's treatment of the Marxian philosophy of history is the most valuable contribution of his book. Under the influence of A. Kojeve, he stresses the Hegelian, dialectical origins of Marx's position; and following G. Lukács, points to the importance of the concept of historical totality in the Marxian analysis. Marx's philosophy of history rejects the utopian views of his predecessors and attempts to uncover the seeds of the future in the structure of the present, while at the same time recognizing the contingency of the present. For Marx, the proletariat is the subject-object of history; it is the product of capitalist society which in itself, as subject, continually reproduces. Only when the proletariat understands its position, becomes conscious of itself as a class, will the humanist revolution take place; only then will man's relation to man and to nature cease to be ruled by reification and become truly human, the beginning of a non-alienated history.

Yet, despite his sensitive and sympathetic treatment of the Marxian position, Merleau-Ponty was not a Communist. He attacks the practice of modern Communist parties as non-dialectical, a "kind of neo-Communism which borders on pragmatism." His book poses a dilemma, for "it is impossible to be an anti-Communist and it is not possible to be a Communist." He considers Marxism as "still valid as a critique of the present world and alternative humanisms," and argues that "the permanent possibility in every country of a proletarian movement" makes Marxism still a real force.

But he goes no further, for he was bound by the times in which he lived. Today, after May '68, it is possible to go further, for the proletariat once again revealed its strength. At the same time, however, the number of those acting in the name of the proletariat who find recourse to violence and terror necessary to their revolution is growing. This disturbing phenomenon, typical of a declining society with no organized Left opposition (as was also the case, for example, in the Russia of the *Narodnaja Wolja*), must be confronted, historically and dialectically; and we too, along with those whose passion for justice pushes them to terror, must ask the question which Merleau-Ponty poses here: if "in advocating non-violence one reinforces established violence, or a system of production which makes misery and war inevitable," how can we "find a violence which recedes with the approach of man's future"? Can we find a violence which is "revolutionary and capable of creating human relations among men"? This is the problem which stands first on the agenda of our times.

"SENATOR CHARLES 'Three's-a-Crowd' Percy says he will sponsor a bill in the 92nd Congress to limit the number of income tax exemptions for children to two, because what with the population explosion and the pablum shortage two children per family should become 'a way of life in America.' Senator Dooley Mossback (I., Confusion), meanwhile, will propose legislation requiring the government to mind its own goddam business."

For a free copy of NATIONAL REVIEW, write: Dept. U, 150 E. 35 Street, N. Y. 10016.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Certain World: A Commonplace Book

W. H. AUDEN

Viking, $10

ANNE FREMANTLE

There are various ways by which people reveal themselves. The British always thought highly of the handshake and the chin; handwriting too, used to qualify an aspiring housemaid or disqualify an aspiring diplomat. Games, again, were—maybe still are?—considered revealing: how a man served, how he lost a set, how he cannoned off the red, how and when he castled—these reflected soul or psyche. Choice of friends or boon companions is a source of many proverbs in umpteen languages, *dis moi qui te hante, qui con lobos anda,* etc. But among the literate, preferred books, and passages from books are the greatest give-aways. Some people, like the late Sheila Kaye-Smith, have written their autobiography in the form of *All the Books of My Life;* others, like Walter de la Mare, have woven out of their favorite reading their most intimate romance (*Henry Brocken*). W. H. Auden, the greatest living English language poet, has chosen to publish his "commonplace book" as a "map of my planet," declaring that "biographies of writers, whether written by others or themselves, are always superfluous and usually in bad taste," (yet how we would miss Gosse, Duff-Cooper, Maugham, the Sitwells, Spender and many more) while announcing that "this compilation is a sort of autobiography."

However, to this reader, it seems more of a "chap-book" than a "common-place" book. Chap-book: a "miscellaneous collection of poems, ballads, stories, or religious tracts" says the American Heritage Dictionary, while qualifying common-place book as "passages in a book made for reference," and derives the latter's name from *locus communis,* "literary passages of universal application"—which Mr. Auden's selections are not. It also seems more of a character study than an autobiography; there are no such revelations as Sacheverell Sitwell made in his *Journey to the End of Time,* that the unhappiest day of his life was when he had to leave his mother and go to prep-school, and, in the train, realized she would die . . .

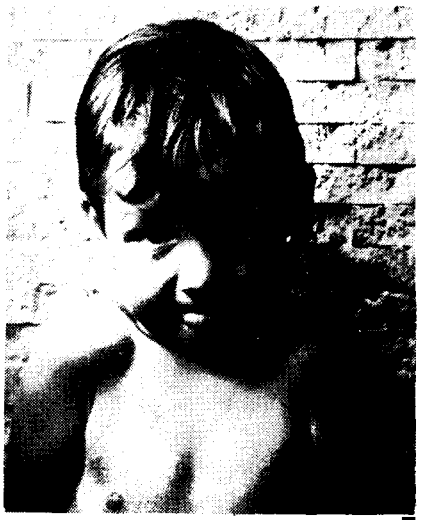
What this book does reveal, and magnificently, are the preferences and peeves, the loves and loathings, the deep concerns and passionate beliefs, the delights and despisions of a man of whom one of his contemporaries—a fat critic not noted for kindliness—has written that "it is impossible to deny that W. H. Auden is a very great man."

Mr. Auden arranges his book alphabetically, so "age" comes early, and he admits that "as the youngest child and youngest grandchild" in his family, and the youngest in his class, he usually assumed he was the youngest person present, so it is only now, when past sixty, that, "for the first time . . . I am almost able to believe that I shall die." He detests cold baths, and has nostalgia for brass bands.

He loved Dr. Hoffman's *Struwelpeter,* his favorite poem therein the Story of Little Suck-a-thumb. This should have given him a castration complex, but only aroused a "pleasing fictional fear." Yet he confesses he only ever had one memorable dream—a nightmare also connected to the "long red-legged Scissor man" in Little Suck-a-thumb. He learned to articulate clearly—he is a superb lecturer—and to love music by being a choir-boy, lucky to possess a good voice, and so "long before I took a conscious interest in poetry I had acquired a certain sensitivity to language which I could not have acquired in any other way." Auden's father having been a doctor and his mother a nurse, he is very interested in medicine, and gives several fascinating pages from Dr. Basil Yanofsky on anesthesia.

He thinks John Howard Griffin is the bravest living American, quoting from *Black Like Me.* If he had taken Holy Orders, Auden might by now, he feels, be a bishop "politically liberal I hope, theologically and liturgically conserva-

(*Continued on page 229*)



Listen for the sounds of love...

Where do you hear them?

In a plea for help from someone who needs it? In a dialogue between students and the Establishment? In a talk session for a marriage-on-the-rocks? At a Catholic Mass conducted in an Episcopal Church?

You'd be surprised.

The sounds of love are everywhere — anyone can hear them. If they *listen.*

The Paulists listen. But, like everything in life, the things that matter most are the hardest.

It isn't easy being a Paulist. But then, the best things in life never are.

If you are interested in more information about the Paulist priesthood, write to:

Rev. Donald C. Campbell, C.S.P.
Vocation Director

Paulist Fathers

Room 114A
415 West 59th Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dom Helder Camara: For Whom the Nobel Tolls

TOM QUIGLEY

I still can't remember the name of the guy who won the Nobel Peace Prize a few weeks ago but everybody knows Dom Helder. He's the guy who didn't win it. Supporting his nomination before the regal presences of Sweden and Norway were the Catholic bishops of Belgium and Canada, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Christian Trade Unions of Latin America, the Lutheran World Assembly, *The Christian Century, Der Spiegel,* The National Coalition of American Nuns and a host of other prestigious organizations (including the agency I work for). Maybe it was this unprecedented support from church types more than the non-violent radicalism of Recife's bishop that scared off their royal highnesses.

In 1970 you could have gotten away without awarding the prize. Peace, and justice which is supposed to be related to it, have been pretty elusive of late, so that might have been worth saying. But for the spiritual heirs of Alfred Nobel to single out (1) a virtually unknown (2) North American (3) working in Latin America for the (4) Rockefeller and (5) Ford Foundations is a mind-blowing exercise worthy of the Father of Dynamite. (If I were a chauvinistic Irishman I'd even point out that he's of Scandinavian extraction.)

Whatshisname's a great fellow, of course, no two ways about it, a technician with dirty fingernails and all. But the day after the Vatican's Justice and Peace man said it was "truly wonderful" and that they were "delighted" with the choice, the Laureate made some very non-Vatican-sounding noises about soaring birthrates and the need to control population. Dom Helder wouldn't have said that. He shares, with most non-Marxist leftists of South America, a strong adversion to the kind of population control programs that Robert McNamara and USAID—and the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations—have been promoting so unsuccessfully in Latin America during the past Underdevelopment Decade.

All right, so who is Helder Camara? In the strange world I inhabit, "everybody" knows him; his name comes up in print or conversation about four times a week (as against twice for Camilo, once each for Fidel and Nixon, and so on). I've talked with him twice, heard him speak a couple more times, read a score of his talks, but until Jose De Broucker's book, I hadn't known him. I'd known a rad-lib holy bishop stick figure.

The Violence of a Peacemaker: Dom Helder Camara

JOSE DE BROUCKER

Orbis, $4.95

With De Broucker he comes alive, with both strengths and contradictions I hadn't realized before. He's more thoroughly radical, more traditionally pious and more politically pragmatic than he's usually given credit or blame for. He's unquestionably one of the greatest people alive but he didn't get that way by hiding in the Carmel or hearing confessions in Ars. Janio Quadros just didn't ask every *simple de Dios* to be his Vice President. Or Kubitschek to be his Minister of Education.

Last September the ultra-rightist bishop of Diamantina (which I keep calling Dementia) called Helder "a fascist of the Left." That in itself I find refreshing, that bishops of the same episcopal conference can spar with each other in the pages of *Le Monde* without either worrying about "scandalizing" the imaginary faithful. But did you know that Helder did in fact flirt with Fascism—of the Right? In the early 30's he was a rising figure in the Integralist movement in Brazil, a founder of the brown-shirted October Legion, an admirer of Salazar and Mussolini—and of the Little Flower.

Some thirty years later he waited anxiously but in vain for a telegram from his friend Bishop Wright of Pittsburgh. "What shall I do? I must go there, of course! But I cannot go without first seeing the American bishops and learning whether or not my intervention will create problems for them." The "there" was Baltimore where his friend Dan Berrigan and the others of the Catonsville Nine were to be tried. Needless to say, the telegram never came.

In this book, painfully translated from the French (Camilo joined the "maquis"?), you will learn of the deception of the NATO powers' "aid" to Latin America, of the reasons arguing against a violent solution to Latin America's problems, of the present Brazilian government's betting on the outcome of World War III, of the uses of clericalism and of the fatuity of calling for "a third way" between capitalism and socialism (Dom Helder and now many other Latin bishops are frank in speaking only of a socialism adapted to Latin America).

But more than that. You will meet a poet who writes easy essays like Peter Maurin, a son of the church who loves and trusts the Pope more than any Curialist, and a radical who lives exactly—no, I mean exactly—what he preaches.

Nobel Prize indeed. De Broucker's book will do for this season.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(*Continued from page 227*)

tive." He considers it worthwhile to ask himself "who we should have been and what we should have been doing" on Good Friday: he, in an optimistic mood, sees himself as a Hellenized Jew from Alexandria visiting an intellectual friend. Passing the "all too familiar sight—three crosses surrounded by a jeering crowd"—he frowns with prim distaste, and averts his eyes from the disagreeable spectacle, while resuming his fascinating discussion about "the nature of the True, the Good and the Beautiful." Always he has perfect theological pitch: never was any doctor of the church more easily, happily, orthodox.

Among his quotes, there are many from Dag Hammarskjold, whom he translated. One of them: "Your cravings as a human animal do not become a prayer just because it is God whom you ask to attend to them." There are sixteen entries from Simone Weil. The following are some quotes from Auden himself.

"To talk about God, except in the context of prayer, is to take His name in vain."

"We must believe before we can doubt, and doubt before we can deny. And, with the exception of autistic children, we all do begin by believing what we are told."

"The significance of the Mass. As biological organisms, we must all, irrespective of sex, age, intelligence, character, creed, assimilate other lives in order to live. As conscious beings the same holds true on the intellectual level: all learning is assimilation. As children of God, made in His image, we are required in turn voluntarily to surrender ourselves to being assimilated by our neighbors according to their needs. The slogan of hell: Eat *or* be eaten. The slogan of Heaven: Eat *and* be eaten."

"God," says W. H. Auden, "may find faith in us even more difficult than we find faith in Him; God's love, when we first begin to get some inkling of how He loves us, repels us, it seems so cold. Or, as a Hasidic text has it: 'God is not nice. God is not an uncle. God is an earthquake.' "

Auden points out that the miracle at Pentecost was not glossalalia, but simultaneous translation, and that the purpose of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception is to make Our Lady "an honorary Aryan . . . as if we didn't all know perfectly well that the Holy Ghost and Our Lady both speak British English, He with an Oxford, She with a Yiddish accent."

Nothing can be gained by commitment except the enhancement of a writer's literary reputation, "the evil, or injustice, will remain exactly what it would have been if he had kept his mouth shut." He differentiates between the loud-voiced commands of the superego and the soft interrogations of conscience, and is very sound on Hell, pointing out that since God has given us free will, "He cannot prevent us from going to Hell and staying there if that is what we insist upon."

And lastly, this reviewer's two favorite quotes: Virginia Woolf's description of the earth during a total eclipse, giving her the feeling "as the light went out of some vast obeisance, something kneeling down and suddenly raised up when the colors came" and Franz Kafka's "In German the word *sein* signifies both things: to be and to belong to Him."

REVIEWERS

DAVID GROSS is an assistant professor of history at the University of Colorado with a special interest in 19th and 20th-century European history.

DICK HOWARD teaches in the Department of Philosophy at Southern Illinois University.

TOM QUIGLEY is with the Division for Latin America, Department of International Affairs of the United States Catholic Conference.

ANNE FREMANTLE is the well-known author, anthologist and critic.

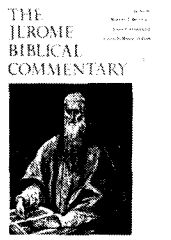
CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 211*)

blame later Soviet crackdowns "in part" on "Truman's aggressive diplomacy" seems misplaced emphasis; and it is simply a howler to assert that "the present status of Finland serves as a rough indicator of the fate of a border state in which Washington left the Soviets alone." Try peddling that in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, not to mention Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Again that phrase "impressive documentation." It is not "documentation" but *ex parte* surmise for Alperovitz and

A most memorable
Christmas Gift:



THE JEROME BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

Edited by Raymond E. Brown, S.S., Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, S.J., and Roland E. Murphy, O. Carm.

"This monumental work is one of the most important publications of 1968."—AMERICA

"The best work of its kind so far produced."
—William F. Albright

1969 National Catholic Book Award Winner, Scripture Category. 1568 pp.

$29.95 at your bookstore or by mail to:

Prentice-Hall
Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

GIVE COMMONWEAL
FOR CHRISTMAS

SEE ORDER FORM ON page 230

Classified

● RATES: 50¢ a word, 12 words minimum. Centered lines: $3.00 a line. Discounts: 5%, 3 times; 10%, 7 times; 15%, 13 times. Payable with order.

Encounters

● OPPORTUNITY to explore self-defeating attitudes, feelings and untapped potential. Weekend workshops in Los Angeles and Bass Lake, $25. BILL VON DER AHE, Bass Lake, California 93604.

Journal

● Current issue, JOURNAL OF PASTORAL COUNSELING: Values in Religious Therapy, Body Movement, Psychosynthesis, etc. Two issues per year, $5 subscription. Dept. C, JOURNAL OF PASTORAL COUNSELING, Iona College, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801.

Sleep

● SLEEP—without pills! Simple exercises. 64 page book. Send $1 for #WB-120 to THE HOUSE OF MIZE, P.O. Box 3097, Knoxville, Tenn. 37917.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"A PRESTIGIOUS WEEKLY OPINION JOURNAL" The New York Times

"THE MOST INTELLECTUAL OF U.S. CATHOLIC WEEKLIES" TIME

"EASILY THE MOST DISTINGUISHED CATHOLIC WEEKLY" Newsweek

Don't look now, but . . . only one month till Christmas.

Why not do your Christmas shopping in the next five minutes? With a swish of the quill.

In a time of crisis in church and nation, *Commonweal's* combination of engagement and reflection, of the secular and the religious, of scholarship and lively writing, will be the most welcome of gifts.

Commonweal speaks clearly, independently, thoughtfully. Deeply committed to religious concerns, it treats political and cultural developments on their own terms and with the best writers possible, whether Catholic or not.

Friends and relatives will appreciate gift subscriptions to *Commonweal*—a once-a-year Christmas present that comes once a week.

CHRISTMAS ORDER FORM

Please send these friends gift subscriptions at the special Christmas Rates:
1 Subscription, $12; each additional, $9

(Add $2 for postage outside U.S. and Canada)

Name	Name	*MY NAME IS*
Street	Street	Street
City, State, Zip	City, State, Zip	City, State, Zip
New ☐ Renewal ☐	New ☐ Renewal ☐	

COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., N. Y., N. Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Williams to allege sinister anti-Soviet motives in the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan. I, for one, do not accept "the fact (sic) that Truman and his closest advisors knew perfectly well that . . . a home island invasion would not be needed. . . ."

I am a little unclear as to whether Prof. Gurney has merely summarized the new-left thesis or propounded it as his own. In either case it is an unproved hypothesis and in my opinion wrong. Like all such hypotheses, in seeking to modify earlier interpretations—perhaps a legitimate exercise—it bends the bough too roughly in the other direction. "As everyone knows," Prof. Gurney tells us, the assessment that the Soviets would invade Western Europe in the forties "proved fictional." What seems equally likely is that Western potential force *made* it fictional and thereby benefited all free men.

DANIEL B. CARROLL
Associate Professor of History
Villanova University

Vernon, B.C.

To the Editors: The U.S. has been accused of more atrocious acts than that of starting the *Cold* War ["Soviet Motives and U.S. Suspicions," Oct. 16]. I mean, after all, we live in a *nuclear* age. And being the first nuclear power, how is it that America came out of its ventures in Eastern Europe empty-handed; an America, the revisionists tell us, that was "energetically intriguing" in Europe, backed by a President ready to use the A-bomb, if necessary? The answer is simple, says Mr. Gurney: had Russia been permitted a freer hand in Eastern Europe, the United States would have come out ahead, with more influence there. As if such an absurd conclusion is not enough, Mr. Gurney argues that the revisionist thesis has application to the present international situation i.e. an abdication, or lessening of U.S. power, (e.g. stop the ABM) is an important first step in a U.S.-Soviet detente. Let us apply Mr. Gurney's advice to his own revisionist theory and allow the Russians their natural predominant place in the world. Russia then supplants the U.S. as the number one world power and Mr. Gurney's theories, if consistent, will tell us the result. To wit, his article, p. 64 with the categories changed:

"So long as the . . . (U.S.S.R.) remains . . . one jump ahead of the . . . (U.S.) in the arms race . . . no far-reaching detente is likely. Mutual suspicion and animosity will remain. This is only logical. How can the . . . (U.S.)—or any country for that matter—be expected to negotiate lasting settlements from a position of weakness? Such settlements would always be framed to the advantage of the . . . (U.S.S.R.) and to the detriment of the . . . (U.S.), a contingency *no responsible government could permit.*" (Italics mine).

Try the same technique elsewhere in the article. Does it sound as if detente is just around the corner?

A. HIEBERT
Okanagan College

Justice and the Law

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: Among other things, Dan Berrigan's refusal to surrender to the F.B.I. poses this question: has the consolidation and exercise of power in this nation come to the point that our best instincts with respect to law are being used to make us powerless to combat injustice?

The principle of civil disobedience has enjoyed at least grudging acceptance in this country for some time. As Berrigan points out [*Commonweal,* May 29, 1970], it proved a useful tool for some civil rights struggles in the South. But, and this is essential, it assumes a higher authority which will be responsive to the issues raised by "the good man taking responsibility for his actions." We assume, instinctively, that a person who conscientiously breaks the law will "pay up on demand" in the hope of making a higher jurisdiction sensitive to injustice. But are we not betrayed by our instincts when power has been consolidated to a degree that renders it immune to any sort of external pressure? (A thorough examination of this question appears in "The Greening of America" by Charles A. Reich, *The New Yorker,* September 26, 1970.)

Dan Berrigan is not, as Walker Percy feels, (*Commonweal,* Sept. 4, 1970), "placing himself above the law." Rather, he is calling our attention to the need for developing effective procedures that will insure, especially on a national and global level, that what is law is what is right.

JOHN T. RADELET

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

To Serve the Lord in Faith and Understanding

THE CATHOLIC SEMINARY of Indianapolis, O.S.B. offers a program of Theological Education and Training in Ministry to Catholic men and women preparing for ordained or lay Christian ministry. Ecumenical, Urban, Creative orientation. Scholarships available. Placement service.

Write to: The Dean, Catholic Seminary of Indianapolis, O.S.B. 4545 Northwestern Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208.

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____

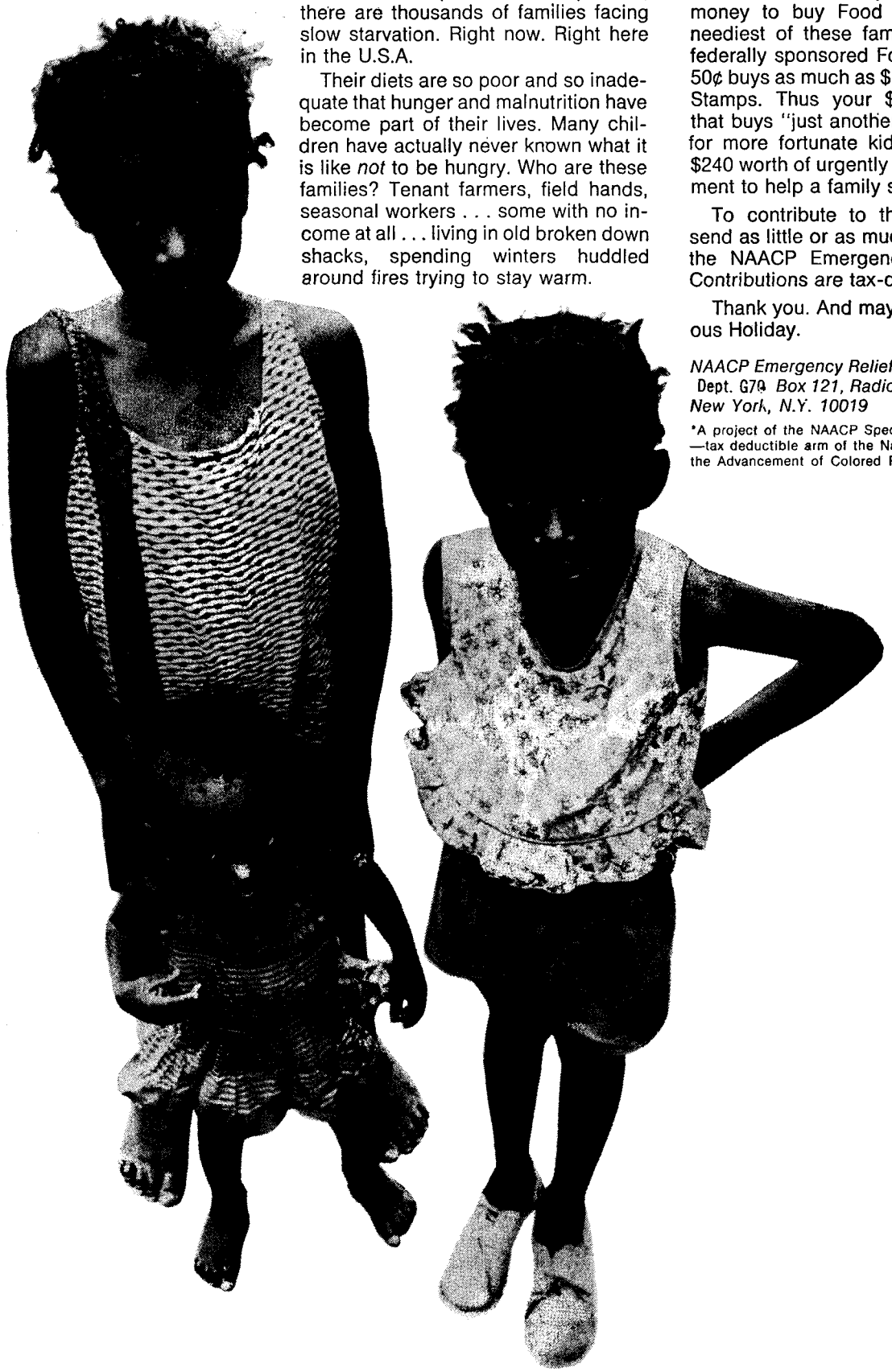
Special Interest _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Your $10 Christmas gift will provide up to $240 worth of meat, milk and bread for hungry families

On the back roads of Mississippi, Alabama and other parts of the deep South, there are thousands of families facing slow starvation. Right now. Right here in the U.S.A.

Their diets are so poor and so inadequate that hunger and malnutrition have become part of their lives. Many children have actually never known what it is like *not* to be hungry. Who are these families? Tenant farmers, field hands, seasonal workers . . . some with no income at all . . . living in old broken down shacks, spending winters huddled around fires trying to stay warm.



The NAACP Emergency Relief Fund is now in its third year of collecting money to buy Food Stamps for the neediest of these families. Under the federally sponsored Food Stamp Plan, 50¢ buys as much as $12 worth of Food Stamps. Thus your $10—an amount that buys "just another Christmas gift" for more fortunate kids — can mean $240 worth of urgently needed nourishment to help a family survive.

To contribute to this fund, please send as little or as much as you can to the NAACP Emergency Relief Fund. Contributions are tax-deductible.

Thank you. And may you have a joyous Holiday.

*NAACP Emergency Relief Fund**
Dept. G79 *Box 121, Radio City Sta.*
New York, N.Y. 10019

*A project of the NAACP Special Contribution Fund —tax deductible arm of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED